

---

Torch

---

Spring 3-1-1978

# Torch, Spring 1978

Cedarville College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/torch>



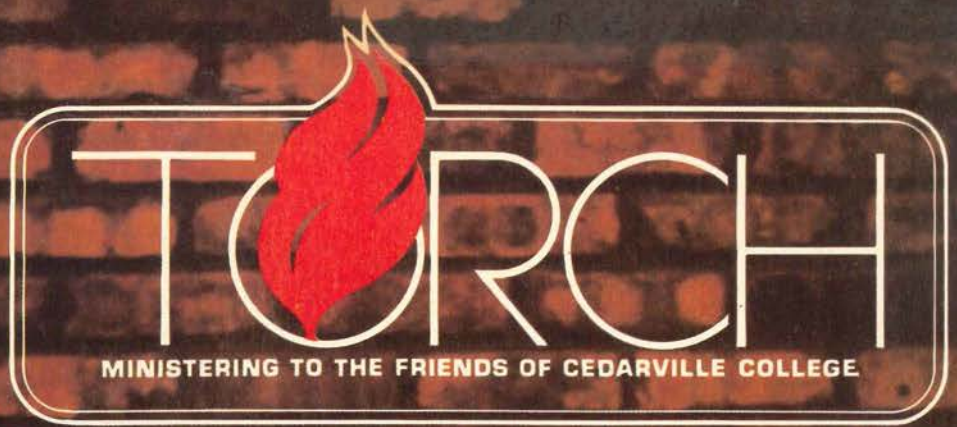
Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Organizational Communication Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Cedarville College, "Torch, Spring 1978" (1978). *Torch*. 98.  
<https://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/torch/98>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Cedarville, a service of the Centennial Library. It has been accepted for inclusion in Torch by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Cedarville. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@cedarville.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@cedarville.edu).



**The Bible...**

**Is it really the Word of God?**





*"... the things that  
thou hast heard from me  
among many witnesses,  
the same commit thou to  
faithful men,  
who shall be able  
to teach others also."  
2 Timothy 2:2*

The Cedarville College  
*Torch* is published quarterly  
for the alumni and friends of  
Cedarville College.

Comments, constructive  
criticism and requests for  
reprints should be directed  
to:

CEDARVILLE COLLEGE  
CEDARVILLE, OHIO  
45314

## CONTENTS

DESIGNED FOR YOU	3
THE IMPORTANCE OF INSPIRATION JAMES T. JEREMIAH	4
WHY SHOULD I READ MY BIBLE? ROBERT G. GROMACKI	6
COLLEGE NEWS	8
THE CANON: RULE FOR FAITH JAMES M. GRIER	10
NEW LIGHT IN THE DARK ALLEN FISHER	12

### Editor

Lee C. Turner

### Associate Editors

Roy W. Kern

Circulation & Photography

Daniel C. Stevens

Copy & Design

### Assistants

Linda Benson

Layout and Design

Debbie Kitchen

Copy

### Graphics Consultant

Stan Seevers

New Life Media

Cedarville, OH

### TORCH

Vol. 1 No. 1

Cedarville College

James T. Jeremiah, President

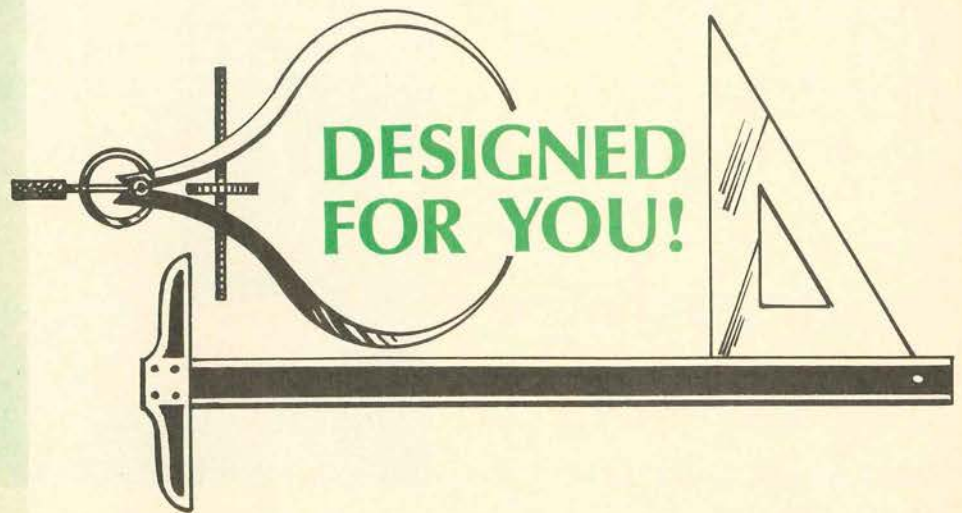
Cedarville, Ohio 45314

Second Class Postage Paid

at Fostoria, Ohio.

NO PAID SUBSCRIPTIONS





THIS premier edition of the Cedarville College *Torch* is designed to begin an effective ministry in your life. In the months and years ahead your relationship with Christ can be strengthened and developed by the Biblical articles and information which will be provided for you.

The topic presented in this first issue is an extension of the position which Cedarville College maintains in the educational world. At Cedarville, the inspiration, inerrancy and authority of the Word of God form the foundation for the instruction of dedicated young men and women. The Bible is the central textbook of the College.

As you benefit from this new form of communication, you will come to understand, perhaps for the first time, the value of Christian higher education. You will also learn that many opportunities exist for those who are willing to help *Pass The Torch* to a generation of future leaders for the church of Jesus Christ our Lord.



...την μητέρα, καὶ  
 ἀφούς, καὶ τὰς ἀδελφάς, ἐ.  
 νναταί μου μαθητῆς εἶναι. καὶ  
 λυρόν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔρχεται ὀπίσω  
 αὐτοῦ μαθητῆς. τίς γὰρ ἐξ ὑμῶν, θέλων π  
 ὕχι πρῶτον καθίσας ψηφίζει τὴν δαπνί  
 παρτισμόν; ἵνα μήποτε, θέντος αὐτο  
 σχύοντος ἐκτελέσαι, πάντες οἱ θεωροῦντ  
 εἰν αὐτῷ, λέγοντες ὅτι Οὗτος ὁ ἀνθρωπ  
 οῦν, καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσεν ἐκτελέσαι. ἢ τίς βα  
 ρυμβαλεῖν ἐτέρῳ βασιλεῖ εἰς πόλεμον οὐ  
 δουλεύεται εἰ δυνατός ἐστιν ἐν δέκα χι  
 ῶν μετὰ εἴκοσι χιλιάδων ἐρχομένων ἐπ'  
 αὐτοῦ πόρρω ὄντος, πρεσβείαν ἄπτε

## The Importance of Inspiration

James T. Jeremiah, D.D.



*Dr. James T. Jeremiah believes that the writers of the Bible recorded precisely what God wanted revealed. In this article he explains that "Our basic affirmation is that in employing language, God saw to it that the right words were used in the right way at the right time."*

**C**HURCH history reveals that every age has its own doctrinal problems. The verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures has been thrown into the theological arena of our generation. Many years ago Dr. James Orr predicted that this would be true.

That battle will have to be fought, if I mistake not, in the first instance, around the fortress of the work and authority of Holy Scripture. A doctrine of Scripture adapted to the needs of the hour, harmonizing with the demands at once of science and of faith is perhaps the most claimant want at present in theology; but the whole conception of

Christianity will get drawn in and many of the old controversies will be revived in new forms.<sup>1</sup>

In this battle we have the fundamentalist on one hand who insists on a trustworthy Bible; and on the other, the liberal and the neo-orthodox, both promoters of the ecumenical movement who consider an inspired Bible not only to be of little importance, but rather a hindrance to a falsely-founded church union. In order to unite Christendom in one great religious force, the inspiration of the Bible and resultant doctrines are by these men considered to be of little consequence: sincerity of attitude is a substitute for sound doctrine in order to make one church. This will lead to an ever-increasing dependence on centralized ecclesiastical authority and develop into a philosophy similar to that of the Jewish Sanhedrin where tradition and human reason, rather than the Word of God, became the basis for one's faith.

The doctrine of inspiration is of vital importance since there can

be no Biblical infallibility and authority without it.

If the Bible is not infallible, then we can be sure of nothing. The other doctrines of Christianity will then, one by one, go by the board. The fortunes of Christianity stand or fall with an infallible Bible. Attempts to evade this conclusion can only lead to self-deception.<sup>2</sup>

It does matter very much whether or not we have an inspired Bible. There can be no Christianity without it.

### THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF INSPIRATION

What does the Bible actually teach regarding its own inspiration? "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16). The meaning of this verse has been summarized by Dr. Merrill F. Unger in the following words:



This pivotal passage in the plainest possible terms teaches five great truths: first, the plenary inspiration of the Bible—"all"; secondly, the plenary inspiration specifically of the Old Testament—(later, when the sacred canon was completed, the New Testament, also) "all Scripture"; thirdly, the divine authorship of Scripture—"given by inspiration of God"; fourthly, the supreme value of all Scripture to the spiritual life because of its inspiration and consequent authority—"profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"; fifthly, the holy purpose of Scripture—"that the man of God may be perfect (or complete), thoroughly furnished unto all good works."<sup>3</sup>

All scripture is inspired; that is, God-breathed. We believe the words were chosen of God so that the writers recorded precisely what God wanted revealed. "Our basic affirmation is that in employing language, God saw to it that the right words were used in the right way at the right time."<sup>4</sup>

This passage in 2 Timothy is not the only and isolated text which suggests the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scripture. In prophetic language the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" (Deut. 18:18). To Jeremiah the prophet God said, "Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth... and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee..." (Jer. 1:9,17). In the New Testament Christ promised the writers of the New Testament infallible communication by the Holy Spirit (John 14:26). The early

Christians accepted this message "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God..." (1 Thess. 2:13). Peter testified to the inspiration of the Scriptures when he wrote, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

The phrase, "Thus saith the Lord", or its equivalent, occurs about two thousand times in the Old Testament. If these Biblical quotations mean anything, they do teach that "Those to whom God gave His revelation were men born of the Holy Spirit, whose messages were infallibly delivered and absolutely free from error, being precisely the words that God Himself wished to have declared."<sup>5</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES

1. James Orr, *The Progress of Dogma* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1901), p. 352.
2. Edward J. Young, *Thy Word is Truth* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing House, 1957), p. 5.
3. Merrill F. Unger, "The Inspiration of the Old Testament," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, CVII, October-December, 1950, (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary), pp. 432, 433.
4. William Fitch, *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture* (Toronto: Toronto Bible College, 1965), p. 7.
5. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

Dr. James T. Jeremiah is the President of Cedarville College.

This article is an excerpt from his book *The Importance of Inspiration* (Des Plaines, Illinois: Regular Baptist Press, 1972). Reprinted by permission. Available from the Cedarville College Bookstore at a cost of \$2.95. Ohio residents please enclose 14¢ sales tax.

#### SPECIAL SPEAKERS

Twenty men on the faculty and staff of Cedarville College participate in a speaker's bureau for worship services, youth rallies, banquets and other special events. These men also provide an excellent resource for up-to-date information about Cedarville College for local churches, camps and Christian organizations.

Those wishing to schedule speakers should contact the Development Office or phone (513) 766-2211, ext. 240.

## The Bible

For further study in regard to the inspiration, inerrancy and authority of God's Word, we suggest the following books and articles:

#### IN DEPTH

***Biblical Revelation*** by Clark Pinnock (Moody, 1971)

A well organized and detailed presentation of the fact and theological implications of inspiration.

***How We Got Our Bible*** by W. H. Griffith Thomas (Moody, 1926)

A small, large-print, newly published edition of a very popular and complete book about the characteristics of God's Word.

***The Battle For The Bible*** by Harold Lindsell (Zondervan, 1976)

A controversial treatment of the topic of inerrancy and its history on the American theological scene.

***The Books And The Parchments*** by F. Bruce (Revell, 1950)

A scholarly explanation of the languages, canons, texts and translations of the Bible.

***The Importance Of Inspiration*** by James T. Jeremiah (Regular Baptist Press, 1972)

A concise presentation of the relationship of inspiration to other major Biblical doctrines.

***The Inspiration And Authority of Scripture*** by Rene Pache (Moody, 1969)

Perhaps the most organized and popular book concerning the doctrine of the Bible.

#### BRIEFLY NOTED

"Inspiration" by Harold Lindsell in ***The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia Of The Bible*** (Zondervan, 1975)

"Inspiration" by Clark Pinnock in the ***Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*** (Moody, 1975)

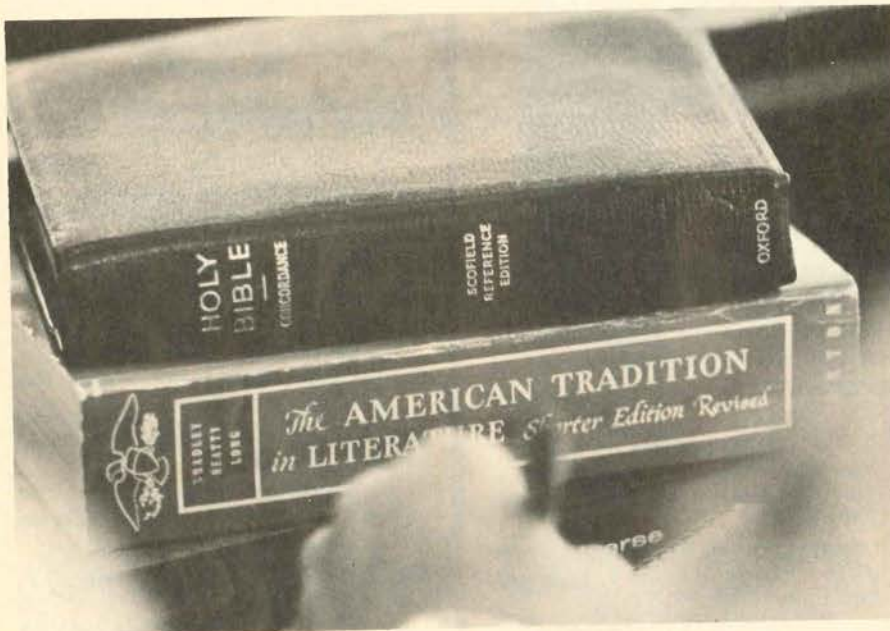
"Is The Bible Inspired?" in ***A Survey of Bible Doctrine*** by Charles Ryrie (Moody, 1972)

"The Word of God" in ***The Bible Has The Answer*** by Henry M. Morris and Martin Clark (Creation-Life, 1976)



# Why Should I Read My Bible?

Robert G. Gromacki, Th.D.



*The profit of Bible study is clearly described in this understandable exposition of 2 Timothy 3:15 and 16. Dr. Gromacki's comments tell why the Scriptures are necessary and what they do for the lives of men.*

If a Little League baseball player wanted to check on Babe Ruth's lifetime batting average or the number of home runs that Johnny Bench hit in 1974, he would have to consult a major league baseball almanac. If a new wife wanted to prepare *moo goo gai pan* for her first month's wedding anniversary dinner, she would probably follow the directions in a Chinese cookbook. If an author wanted to compare synonyms, he would doubtless refer to his thesaurus.

All of these books are profitable because they meet the readers' respective needs and have been written by acknowledged experts

in various disciplines. However, the value of each book is limited to the purpose behind its composition. It would be foolish to look for recipes within a book on baseball statistics. To get information on a specific topic, a person must consult an authoritative book that deals with that particular issue.

Why, then, are the Scriptures valuable? If a person wanted to know what God demands of each man, it would be logical to consult the Book written by Him. Only God can tell man what he must do to be right before Him and gain His heaven. In spiritual matters, it would be foolish and eternally disastrous to rely upon one's own opinion or to depend solely upon the views of other men.

Since the Bible is the inspired or breathed-out Word of God, it is the only authoritative basis of faith and practice. Its spiritual profit can be seen in three areas.

## THE BIBLE IS PROFITABLE FOR SALVATION

From observation of nature and the universe, man can know that God exists and that He is both intelligent and powerful (Rom. 1:19-20). From an analysis of his own personality, man can learn that God is a moral Person to whom he is responsible (Rom. 2:1-6). However, in his sinful state, man has rejected and perverted those basic truths (Rom. 1:18, 21-23). He stands condemned before a holy God because of who he is and what he has done. How then can he be saved?

Paul wrote to Timothy, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15). The Scriptures are necessary and profitable because they alone contain the message of salvation.

### The Scriptures can tell men why they need to be saved. A

knowledge of Scripture does not save, but it can "make one wise unto salvation." It can inform men about the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man, and the eternal judgment of God upon sinners. Paul said that "the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (Gal. 3:22).

### The Scriptures can tell men what they must do to be saved.

The means of deliverance is "through faith." The religions of men declare that man must work for his salvation, but the Bible proclaims that man must trust what God has done. How can man know that this is the only method of salvation? The sinner must be told. Paul stated that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

### The Scriptures can tell men in whom they should put their faith.

Faith, by itself, has no value. The object of the faith manifests its validity. Faith for salvation from



the penalty of sin must be "in Christ Jesus" only. A person must believe that Jesus Christ is God who became man, that Christ died for his sins, and that He rose from the dead. He must trust the person and provision of Christ for his deliverance.

### THE BIBLE IS PROFITABLE FOR SANCTIFICATION

Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Paul wrote that the Scriptures are necessary in order "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:17).

The divine goal for the believer is to be perfect in his character and conduct. The words "perfect" and "thoroughly furnished" both come from the same Greek root (*artios*). This basic word is also used to describe the mending of fishing nets (Matt. 4:21). In a spiritual sense, God wants every believer to be a net that He can use to draw men unto Himself. In order to do that, He must mend the imperfections of the believer's thoughts and deeds (Gal. 6:1, 1 Thess. 3:10). For this progressive task Scripture is absolutely necessary in four basic areas.

**Scripture is necessary for doctrine.** To be right and to act right, a Christian must believe right. Biblical doctrine is sound (Titus 1:9), good (1 Tim. 4:6), godly (1 Tim. 6:3), and uncorrupt (Titus 2:7). True doctrine changes not only a man's head, but also his heart, hands, and feet. It involves doing as well as hearing (James 1:22). If a person does not base his convictions solely upon the Scriptures, he could easily be influenced by the doctrines of demons (1 Tim. 4:1), be swayed by every wind of false doctrine (Eph. 4:14), and be tempted to substitute the commandments of men for divine doctrine (Mark 7:7). To avoid these pitfalls, a believer must be vigilant and give himself to the study of Biblical doctrine (1 Tim. 4:13, 16).

Many Christians cannot express themselves on the basic doctrines of the Biblical faith. Too often they declare what they have heard, what they think, or what they feel. Others cannot distinguish between doctrinal truth and heretical error.

What do you know about the great doctrines of God, the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, sin, salvation, angels, or prophecy? The only authoritative answers can be found in the Scriptures.

**Scripture is necessary for reproof.** How can you tell someone that his belief or his behavior is wrong? Who are you to point the finger at someone else? If you simply base your criticism upon your own opinion, your adversary may say that his opinion is as good as yours. However, if you expose him to the light of the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will be able to convict him of his sinful attitudes and actions (John 16:8). The Holy Spirit can only reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment through the believer's witness. That testimony must manifest the Scripture.

**Scripture is necessary for correction.** The Bible not only points out what is wrong in man, but it also shows him how he can change. The concept behind "correction" is to straighten that which is bent or broken. Just as an X-ray reveals a bone fracture, the Bible reproves a man of his sin. Just as a doctor sets the bone within a cast, the Bible can straighten out a man's behavior with positive attitudes and goals.

Paul commanded, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28). This verse gives an example of both reproof and correction. The first part of the admonition is negative whereas the second is positive. Not only must sin cease, but it must be replaced with positive,

holy habits if spiritual progress is to be achieved.

**Scripture is necessary for instruction in righteousness.** God promised, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Ps. 32:8). God guides and teaches through discipline.

Believers should not despise the chastening discipline of God which is a manifestation of His loving concern (Heb. 12:5-6). This type of instruction can hurt, but it can also yield "the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:11).

### THE BIBLE IS PROFITABLE FOR SERVICE

Paul charged Timothy, "Preach the word" (2 Tim. 5:2). The apostle did not tell his associate to preach from the Word or about the Word; men need to hear what God has said, not what men think or feel. The only means of enlightening the unsaved and nourishing the Christian is the preaching of God's Word. The

In order to gain and maintain attention, many evangelical preachers have become comedians and story tellers rather than men who expound the inspired Word of God. Paul cautioned Timothy, "Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine, For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (2 Tim. 4:2-3).

May God raise up a generation of preachers and laymen who are absolutely committed to the authoritative, inspired Word of God.

Dr. Robert G. Gromacki is a professor and chairman of the Biblical Education department at Cedarville College. He is the author of several books, including *The Modern Tongues Movement*, *New Testament Survey*, and *Called to be Saints*.





### MASTERFUL PUPPETRY

The Master's Puppets, a student Christian Service team will be traveling for Cedarville College during the spring vacation. The team has a unique way of attracting attention and acting-out Biblical messages which present the plan of salvation.

Campus Pastor Harold Green explained, "Our audiences are conditioned to like this type of presentation. Television has made The Muppets one of the most popular programs for children and adults. People are addicted to them."

This spring, many students will be active in Christ-honoring ministries. In addition to the puppet team, two Swordbearer teams will be touring Michigan. Other spring ministries will include an evangelistic team working with a church in Washington, D.C. and a beach evangelism team traveling to Florida.

### FREEDOM FUNDS

"This grant has been approved by our directors on the assumption that your college is fully accredited and continues its past policy of building

and operating without accepting state or federal funds or loans of any kind..." This declaration accompanied a check for ten thousand dollars from the Andersen Foundation of Bayport, Minnesota.

A grant of ten thousand five hundred dollars has also been received from the Master Chemical Company of Perrysburg, Ohio.

Both of these organizations place a high value upon the free enterprise system and appreciate Cedarville College's policy of not accepting government assistance.





These contributions, as well as generous support from other friends of the College, have raised the total gifts for Cedarville's new chapel to almost seven hundred thousand dollars. This center for campus worship and Biblical instruction was erected at a cost of 1.1 million dollars.

#### UNIQUE MINISTRY

Several Cedarville College students have been maintaining a unique ministry at Wittenberg University in nearby Springfield, Ohio. Through the use of a survey of religious views,

there have been many opportunities for these young people to share their faith with Wittenberg students.

The survey was developed by Cedarville Alumnus Bruce McDonald and is designed to review general attitudes before identifying personal beliefs. This design leads to serious conversation about an individual's relationship with Jesus Christ.

The effect of this program was seen recently when Jim Jamison, a Junior, approached a tall, dark-haired student at the University. After the introductory questions the young man

responded, "Do you know how to get to heaven? Then share it with me! I've been searching to find the way."

During the trial use of the survey, three students accepted Christ as their Savior. Those who are participating in this ministry believe that many opportunities will open for additional outreach on the campus of Wittenberg University.





# THE CANON: RULE FOR FAITH

James M. Grier, Th.M.

*In this article, James Grier answers the question, "How do we know that the Bible which we read and obey is that which God intended for us to have?"*

**T**HE current battle for the Bible does not pit the conservative theologian against his counterpart in the camps of liberal or neo-orthodox theology. Rather, the battle rages within conservative theology.

Central to the controversy is the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy. Some assert that it is possible to affirm an inspired, infallible Bible without committing themselves to an inerrant text. Others insist that infallibility logically entails inerrancy and that a denial of one demands a denial of the other.

Infallibility means that the Bible possesses unfailing authority. Inerrancy means that the Bible possesses the quality of freedom from error. Both of these doctrines are germane to a discussion of the canonicity of the Old Testament as well as the New Testament.

## CANONICITY

The Greek word *kanon* and its Hebrew equivalent *qaneh* originally denoted a measuring instrument. When these words

appear in Scripture, they are usually translated reed, rod, staff, or measure. In the fourth century church the term was applied to the Bible as the list of holy writings. Eventually canon became the name for Scripture itself, indicating that God's Word is the rule or norm—the supreme authority. Today, the use of the word canon refers to a closed collection of writings which have been breathed-out by God, thus possessing authority for faith and conduct.

However, canonicity, like all other doctrines, rests on a careful historical-grammatical exegesis of Scripture. The doctrine of the Bible must come from the text of the Bible.

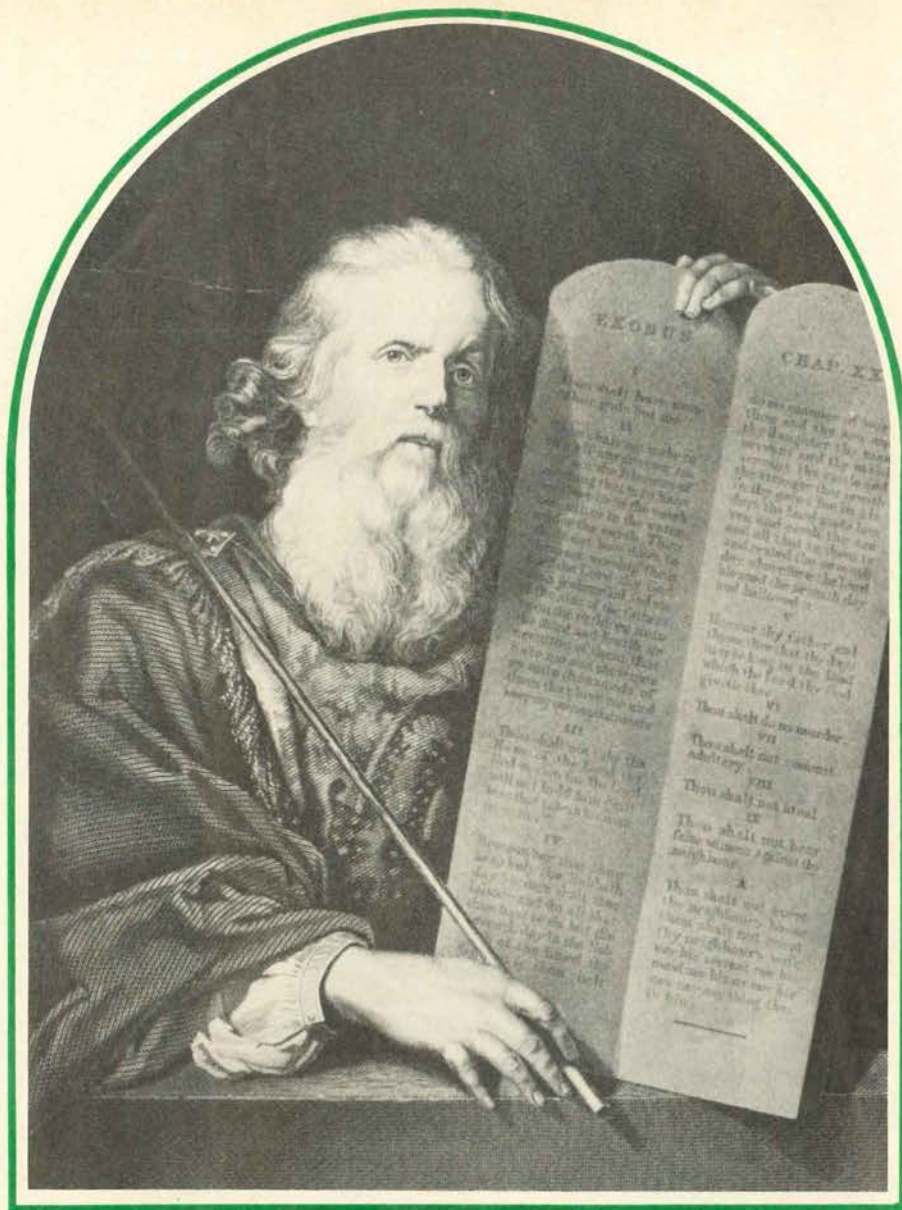
Many questions emerge from the idea of a canon: Why do these sixty-six books possess exclusive authority? When and under what conditions did the people of God

come to acknowledge this authority? How do we know that both the Old Testament and New Testament are canonical? Some general considerations in response to these questions will enable us to develop a framework for specific answers.

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

That which makes a book a rule of faith is the character of its origin. Because the books of the canon originate in the creative breath of God, canonicity is integrally related to inspiration.

This God-breathed Word has the seed of authority in itself. It did not become authoritative because it passed a test or conformed to criteria external to itself. It is canonical because it originated in the speaking of God by men who were borne by the special activity of the Holy Spirit.





God, the Holy Spirit, regenerates men. This is in conjunction with the God-breathed Word, and gives men the spiritual capacity to recognize His Word. Regenerated men are able to catch the light of Scripture and submit to its authority. Jesus confirmed this when He said, "My sheep hear my voice . . . and they follow me" (Jn. 10:27). When men have been born from above they are able to hear the authoritative voice of the Saviour in the Bible and submit to its authority as the rule for their belief and for their conduct.

God's activity in originating the text, bearing the writers, regenerating His people, and providentially gathering and preserving the books is that which constitutes the authoritative character and extent of the canon.

### THE OLD TESTAMENT CANON

The Old Testament books were acknowledged as authoritative by the people of God as soon as they were given. Moses wrote the collection of the law, and the people immediately acknowledged its divine authority by pledging their obedience to it (Ex. 24:4-7). Joshua wrote in the book of the law, and the authority of his words was acknowledged by the people (Josh. 24:26-28). In like manner, the Prophets often quoted one another and rebuked the people for not doing the word of their predecessors (Zech. 1:5; Hos. 6:5). Isaiah mentioned the roll on which his prophecies were written as "the book of the Lord" (Isa. 34:16), and Daniel indicated that by the books (a collection of Prophetic writings including Jeremiah) he was able to understand the seventy-year desolation of Jerusalem (Dan. 9:2).

The New Testament witness to the Old Testament canon is multiple. During the production of the New Testament, the Old Testament existed as a completed collection to which Divine authority was ascribed (II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:21).

Christ's testimony to the absolute authority of the Old Testament cannot successfully be denied, for He declared that the Scriptures cannot be broken (Jn. 10:31-36). The division of the Old Testament into the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms was acknowledged by Christ, and He asserted that they would be fulfilled (Lk. 24:44).

Paul, by the Spirit, referred to these holy Scriptures as the Old Testament which the veiled minds of the Jews could not penetrate (II Cor. 3:14). In addition, all the books of the Old Testament canon are quoted in the New Testament except Esther, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Obadiah, Nahum, and Zephaniah.

### THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON

The foundation of the New Testament canon lies in the eternal counsel of God and the history of His redemptive activity. The New Testament is the record of that which God did redemptively by sending His Son in the fullness of time. The writer of Hebrews declared that God spoke long ago and in many ways by the prophets, but "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1, 2).

Jesus Christ possesses all authority as the risen Redeemer and Lord. The delegation of this authority to men who were to represent Him and testify concerning His redemptive acts is the foundation that undergirds the production of the New Testament record.

Christ chose the Apostles for a very distinctive and significant ministry. Through the Spirit He chose them, authorized them as His representatives, endowed them with power, caused them to be led into all truth, reminded them of what He had said, and manifested things to come.

The Apostolic testimony was a legal eyewitness account of the redemptive history which was to be recorded for the world and the

church. This methodology was planned and commissioned by Christ, for He had promised to build His church on the witness of the Apostles (Mt. 16:18; Eph. 2:21).

The Apostolic writings, like the prophetic corpus, possessed inherent authority from the time of their composition. They were designated by the Apostles (I Th. 5:27; Col. 4:16). Peter placed Paul's writing on a par with the Old Testament Scripture (II Pet. 3:16), and Paul commanded the Thessalonian believers to withdraw from disorderly brothers who did not walk after the Apostolic tradition.

The New Testament canon is established by this exclusive authority of the Apostles as established by Christ. It is a completed canon because of the unique Apostolic witness to the unrepeatable, redemptive acts of Christ. This witness was stabilized in the production of the new Scriptures, which are the foundation of the church as well as the deposit of truth entrusted to the church.

The canon cannot be guaranteed by historical investigation or church councils. Christ laid the foundation for the church, and His absolute authority stands behind it.

### CONCLUSION

The Old Testament and the New Testament stand as the infallible Word of the living God, for they are God-breathed. Their inherent authority is acknowledged by those whom God in His grace has built upon this solid foundation. The Bible is the only extant mode of special revelation and is indeed canon. The Scriptures are God's final and sufficient revelation of Himself. They are our rule for faith and practice.

*sola Scriptura*

James M. Grier is an associate professor of philosophy in the Biblical Education department at Cedarville College.



# New Light in the Dark

An interview with Rev. Gerald Allen Fisher



*"I want to make the Word of God as clear to the Africans as it was to the Greeks."*

*This remark by linguist Allen Fisher summarizes the importance of translating the inspired Word of God. The challenges and frustrations of converting the Bible into a new dialect are revealed in this timely interview.*

**TORCH:** Allen, how did you become interested in translation work?

**FISHER:** My parents, Dr. and Mrs. Gerald Fisher, were missionaries in the Central African Republic for 20 years. I had all of my grade school training in Africa. So, I suppose you could say that I just grew up as a missionary. An interest in linguistic work developed in my life, and I graduated as the first foreign language major at Cedarville College in 1966.

**TORCH:** Does your wife, Ruth, have a similar background?

**FISHER:** Well, yes and no! Although Ruth did not grow up in a foreign country, her interest in missions began years ago in her home church. The pastor, Rev. Roy Hammond, had served several terms as a missionary in the Republic of Chad. He created a strong missions awareness in that church.

**TORCH:** After graduating from Cedarville, what preparation did you receive for your work?

**FISHER:** I earned a master's degree in palestinology at The American Institute/Hebrew University in Israel. I also attended two linguistic institutes and read quite extensively. Ruth also studied linguistics in both Switzerland and England after graduating from Cedarville in 1969.

**TORCH:** Where did you begin your missionary service?

**FISHER:** After a year of language perfection in France, I spent three years in Chad from 1967 to 1971. After that term of service Ruth and I were married and, in April of 1973, we arrived in Chad where I had planned to continue translation work. However, by November of that year "events" in the government had forced our departure. We fled to the United States. Almost everything we owned was destroyed or stolen.

**TORCH:** What did you do then?

**FISHER:** After five months in the States we sailed for Liberia with the purpose of establishing Linguistic work in the Ivory Coast. That was accomplished, and we have been serving in the Ivory Coast since December of 1974.

**TORCH:** What is the main thrust of your work?

**FISHER:** We have reduced the Neao dialect of the Guere language to writing. We have also produced literacy materials for teaching people to read their own language. But the most important task has been that of translating the Bible into Neao.

**TORCH:** Had any previous linguistic work been done in this dialect?

**FISHER:** Hardly any. In fact, the government had received nothing in regard to this dialect which, for all practical purposes, is a distinct language. Only those who have travelled widely in the country are able to understand other dialects of the Guere language.

**TORCH:** Why did you feel it was important to reduce this language to writing?

**FISHER:** The purpose was to provide the Word of God in the language of the people. Only half of the children and very few of the adults can speak or read French, which is the official language of the Ivory Coast.



**TORCH: How effective has your work been?**

**FISHER:** I have been pleased with the results. The government, which has been very critical of language reductions, accepted my work. In fact, they published the reduction of Neao along with the doctoral theses from the university. This represented complete acceptance.

**TORCH: What process do you use in translating the Bible?**

**FISHER:** Well, first of all, I prepare a rough translation from the Greek text. The phrasing is constantly checked for understanding with Bomby, my translation helper. He, in turn, tests the clarity of the work with others who speak Neao.

**TORCH: Do you "test-market" the translation before printing it?**

**FISHER:** Yes. Two hundred copies of the translation are prepared and used in the churches. This is the only part of the Bible which they have, so we get a lot of helpful feed-back from the pastors and the people.

**TORCH: Is the translation then ready for publication?**

**FISHER:** Not quite. We respond to the feed-back by completely reviewing the translation. It is smoothed out and examined for consistency in the translation of identical Greek terms.

Passages with similar problems must also be re-worked and improved. This process often takes over a year.

**TORCH: Now for the question in which we are most interested. Do you feel that the Bible is the inspired Word of God?**

**FISHER:** Absolutely. I once had a translator say to me that the more he translated, the more he doubted the inspiration of the Bible. I have an opposite conviction. My study and work have convinced me that the Bible claims to be and is the inspired Word of God.

**TORCH: How has a belief in inspiration affected your translation work?**

**FISHER:** I think that it has made me more careful in my work and has led to the acceptance of important principles for the translation of God's Word.

**TORCH: What are those principles?**

**FISHER:** First of all, I attempt to say no more and no less than that which appears in the Greek text.

Secondly, I have to make sure that the translation is understood and not misunderstood.

**TORCH: Can you give an example?**

**FISHER:** Sure. The people with whom I work have five different words which can be used to translate the word "spiritual." The problem is that all of these words introduce inaccurate concepts. This makes the communication of terms such as "spiritual gifts" or "spiritual life" very difficult. The solution, in this case, has been to create the term "regenerated spiritual" in order to place the people's thoughts in a new pattern. In this way we develop new content and understanding.

**TORCH: How literal is your translation?**

**FISHER:** It is my intention to make sure that every Greek word is represented in the translation. Yet the final product must follow the word order and special principles of Neao. I want to make the Word of God as clear to the Africans as it was to the Greeks.

**TORCH: This seems like a lot of work. Wouldn't it be effective enough to simply distribute French translations?**

**FISHER:** No, it wouldn't. French is the national language of commerce. But the language of the people's funerals and weddings, their joys and their sorrows, as well as the intimacy of their family life is Neao—and the Bible should be in that language.

**TORCH: What is the hardest part of your translation work?**

**FISHER:** It is very difficult for me to keep the character of my work the same as that of the Greek text. When the text is ambiguous it is my responsibility to keep it ambiguous in Neao. I am translating, not writing a commentary.

**TORCH: What provides the greatest satisfaction?**

**FISHER:** Discovering a clear way to translate an important Biblical term. For a long time we had a hard time translating the word "grace." We thought that there was no equivalent word in Neao because giving is always done with a purpose. It is not an attribute of the people to give without an expectation of repayment.

This forced us to use the term "free gift," which met the need, but in a superficial way. The concept was still not taken from the language of the people.

About a month before we returned home this time, one of our pastors was speaking with an elderly man. He explained that in old times when someone really loved someone he could give something without any thought of return. This was called *Jay-eh*.

We had discovered an almost forgotten concept of unmerited favor and unselfish giving. This can now be used to explain who God is and what He does in providing that which is needed by all men.

Allen and Ruth Fisher are missionaries associated with Baptist Mid-Missions of Cleveland, Ohio. This interview was conducted by Daniel C. Stevens.







## Patterns in Christian Womanhood

Pat Landers Dixon

**Oh, dear, I'd go crazy!  
I couldn't sleep at night!  
Never, never could I do that!**

Typical responses from well meaning women toward my "lot" of being an active evangelist's wife. In their trying to make me feel admired, I feel abnormal.

Why am I not writhing, tossing and turning in my bed? Why don't I have bloodshot eyes—that hallowed-socketed look of one whose love is far away? I'm honestly very happy with my God given "lot"; I have been for thirteen years.

Lonely? I don't know what loneliness is when I compare myself with the one whose Son left His heavenly home for over thirty years. Separated? It's bearable when I again realize that God and His Son were separated because of my sin and rebellion. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34). His will for my life is good and perfect and ACCEPTABLE. It's not a life of enduring but accepting.

I think that I have just preached a small, pointed sermon to myself. Let me rethink that last sentence of the previous paragraph: . . . not a life of enduring but

accepting. Well, I must confess there are moments—not counting days—that I can't even endure. Now, I usually can handle most domestic, familial happenings in an average, level-headed manner. The acceptance stops when that hunk of steel, nuts, and bolts founded on prone-flattened rubber begins to assert itself. Immediately the Bell system locates the missing evangelist.

I wail, "That car, *your* car, is not working!" My husband has such a patient, soothing demeanor. After I dispel my stream of consciousness in my anxious state, he very calmly tells me what to do; he knows me. An even greater Comforter knows me. Psalm 139 proves this. I most firmly believe that our Sovereign God fashioned and developed my temperament so that it would fit perfectly into this life of an evangelist's wife. "Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. . . . Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. . . ." (Psalm 136:3,6).

Looking backward through the steps of my life confirms God's preparation. I have a "womb mate," a twin sister. She was always a home body; her twin was not. I was always a model camper—never homesick. By the second day at camp, she was sitting in a poison ivy bed and eating a bar of Lifebuoy soap trying to become ill so that she'd be sent home. At the age of fifteen, I spent the summer away from home in a camp ministry for deaf children. Independence was a character trait of mine. The experiences and enablement of my being able to be separated from loved ones prepared me for God's purposes in adult life.

I claim to be a maturing Christian—not *matured*, but *maturing*. If I claim this, I should act like it. I have never doubted God's call for Paul and me in this exciting life. Acceptance of the call was easy; praise Him. Complaining about the call and "lot" has hardly occurred; praise Him, too. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God" (II Corinthians 3:5).

Pat Dixon resides in Cedarville, Ohio with her husband, evangelist Paul Dixon, and their sixteen-year-old son, Scott. In addition to her responsibilities as a homemaker and mother, Mrs. Dixon is an assistant professor of English at Cedarville College.

## A LIVING INVESTMENT

Investing in a Cedarville College Gift Annuity assures you of a lifetime income at substantial rates. In addition, every investor becomes a partner in the Christian education of 1200 future leaders.

Last year over 200 young people were graduated to serve the Lord in many professions and in local churches around the world. Your annuity-investment will help Cedarville College to continue this significant ministry.

Cedarville College Gift Annuities have these important features:

1. Guaranteed income for life.
2. A substantial portion of the income is free from federal tax.
3. A generous charitable gift deduction may be claimed.

For more complete information contact the Development Office, Cedarville College, Cedarville, Ohio 45314





## PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS DAY

- Spring Drama Production
- Science Fair
- Tennis, Track and Field Championship Competition
- Academic Counselling
- Financial Aid Counselling
- Recreational Events and Activities

---

### Parents

Crowded conditions do not allow for housing of prospective students in our dormitories. A list of area motels as well as a complete schedule of events may be requested on the form below. This is an excellent opportunity for you and your son or daughter to become fully informed in regard to Christian Higher Education at Cedarville College.

I plan to visit Cedarville College on May 6th.  
Please send: ☐ Reservation Information

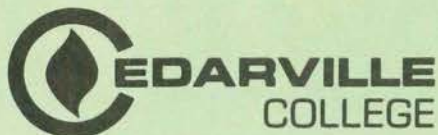
☐ Schedule of events ☐ List of area motels

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

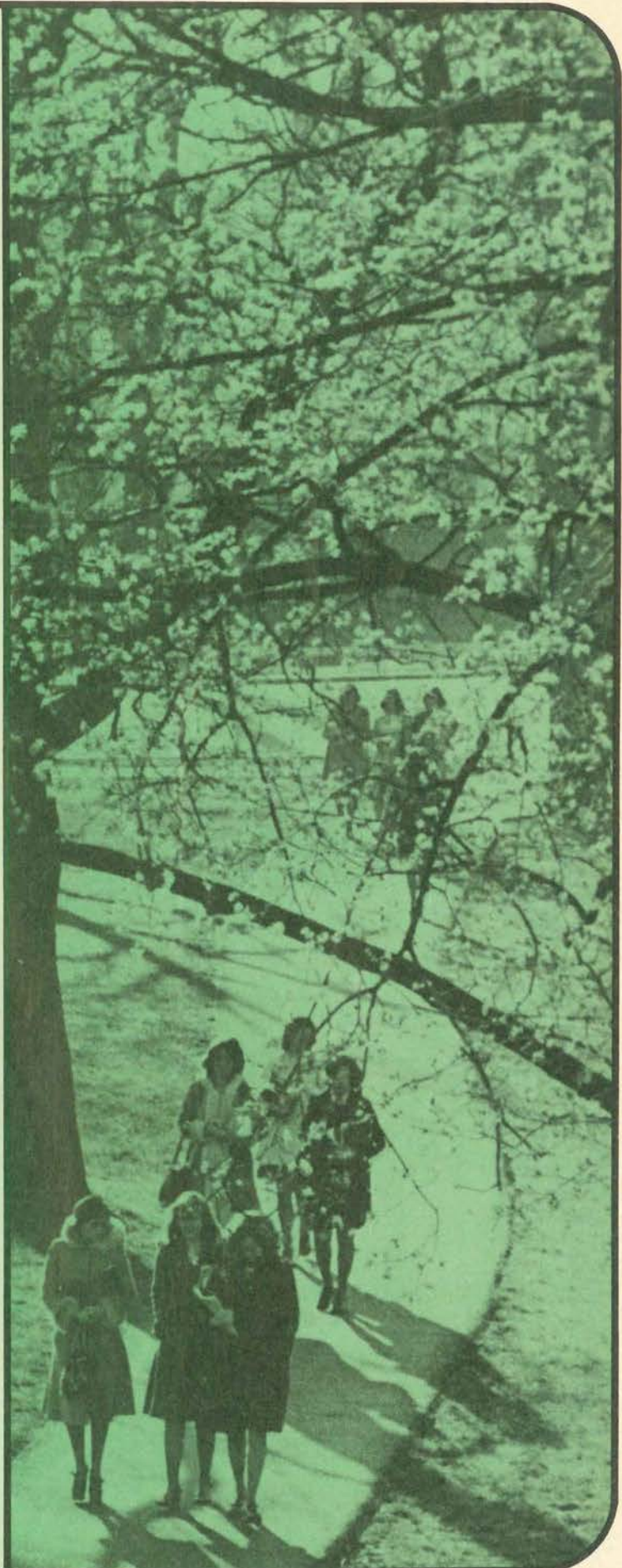
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Development Office, Cedarville College  
Cedarville, Ohio 45314



*A Baptist College of Arts and Sciences*

Cedarville, Ohio 45314 • Dr. James T. Jeremiah, President





# HOPE OF SPRING

DANIEL C. STEVENS

If it were not for the hope of Spring, most of us would find the drab curtains of Winter rather difficult to endure.

The long, cold months which follow Autumn's brilliant display of death are illuminated and kept within the bounds of toleration by the deep seasonal conviction that following the death will come life. After all, what is there to fear in Winter when the future promises Spring; and what is there to fear in death when the future promises life?

Today the resurrection of Jesus Christ has felt the effect of the doubt and uncertainty that characterize our age. The

crucifixion has been replaced by confessions, and the empty tomb has been deserted in favor of ornate crosses and symbolic lilies.

The consequence of this "celebration by transplantation" has been the onset of a long, hard Winter of the soul fed by the cold winds of minds that have lost the hope of Spring.

Perhaps that is why those who follow Christ cling so tenaciously to the belief that He has risen from the dead.

God's Word promises that "it is appointed for men to die once, and after this comes judgment." But through His death, and on the basis of His resurrection, Christ offers the hope of Spring by explaining that "he who hears My Word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."

*After the Winter comes the Spring. There can be hope in this land of death because of the event which we call Easter, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal.*

